

St. Matt's Midweek Update – 9th January 2026

I hope you have had a good week - back to normal and routines!



Last Sunday we sang the song 'Bless God' - it's one of my favourite songs at the moment, but it got me thinking, what does it mean to bless God?

We hear that phrase a lot in the Psalms.

Psalm 103 starts off:

"Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name!"

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits..."

Apparently the Hebrew word translated 'bless' means literally 'to kneel', the implication being to kneel in worship. And many modern translations of the Bible will say 'Praise the Lord' instead of 'Bless the Lord'.

What I love about the song Bless God though is that it is a reminder that we are so incredibly blessed by God, but also that things don't have to be going well for us to praise God. Psalm 103 goes on to talk about God's character and his promises and blessings to us, and those things don't change, regardless of our circumstances.

So the reminder to bless God 'in the fields of plenty' and also 'in the darkest valley' is such a good one. The reminder to bless God 'when nobody's watching', 'for He is worthy', is so important. I can remember being in church at some of the hardest times of my life, not being able to sing to God or pray to God because it was too painful, but knowing that He was still God and that I needed to show up as a sign that I still trusted in Him.

As we come to God in praise, He blesses us. And as He blesses us, we want to bring more of our praise to Him. Amen.

Notices



This Sunday (11th January) we have our 10am service and also our 5pm service.

In the morning, I will be speaking on Kingdom parables (Matthew 13:31-33, 41-46) and there will be groups for our children and young people.

At 5pm, Trevor will be speaking about the baptism of Jesus, and tea and cake will be served from 4.30pm.

Next Sunday (18th January) we just have our 10am service, and Anthony will be coming to speak and lead communion for us.



This week, the hub volunteers have met together and decided that they can and would like to keep the community hub going. Thank you to all of them for their willingness and commitment.

Therefore the hub will be opening again this week, on Wednesday 14th January, from 11am - 2pm, and every Wednesday in term time.

Please do come along if you would like to - there are drinks available throughout the session, as well as toasted sandwiches and soup for lunch. There are also some newspapers, games and puzzles around for people to do if they would like to, as well as some art materials.

Midweek groups

All our other groups are also back to normal this week.

Deeper is back on Monday 12th January at 3.30pm - 5pm for children in school years 3-6.

Ignite and Toddler Group had a good start this week, and the Community Larder is open every Friday from 9.30am - 10.45am.



Would you like to volunteer in 2026, and join one of our church teams?

If you would like to volunteer in any of our teams, please do let me know.

Deeper on Mondays and Sunday morning coffee are the two teams that need more people most at the moment, but we are always happy to welcome new members to any of our teams!



Prayer meetings

We have now got some dates in the diary for getting together to pray this term.

Wednesday 21st January 8pm in the church centre

Thursday 26th February 8pm in the church centre

We really hope you can join us as we keep praying for the appointment process, as well as wider world issues and our church and community.

Mary also runs Mission Prayer Meetings once a month to pray for our mission partners specifically. The next one is on Wednesday 21st January at 3.30pm at Mary's house.

(We know there are two prayer meetings on the same day, but we couldn't find any other evening in January that would work!!).

Fundraising Update

We will let you know how much we raised for Life & Soul over Christmas once we have totalled it all up, but for now a couple of other thank yous for fundraising!

Thank you to Elaine and her choir who raised £740 for the Community Larder before Christmas with their concert!

And thank you to all of you who took part or sponsored those in the Unlock Walk back in April. Apparently St. Matt's was the number one church donor last year! We'll be telling you all about this years walk soon.

Joint Prayer Gathering - Sunday 18th January 6pm at Christ Church TW.

You are invited to join together with Christians from across the town to pray for our town and nation. Come and share together as we lift our voices in worship, praise and prayer.

Part-time Afterschool & Home Help (TN4)

A local family in Tunbridge Wells is looking for a reliable, practical person to help with after-school care and light household support, Monday–Thursday, 2–6pm.

The role includes school pickup for an 8-year-old, simple meal prep, general tidying, laundry, and keeping the household running smoothly.

This would suit someone organised, steady, and looking for regular part-time work in a respectful family home.

If you're interested or would like more information, please email: daniela@andersonpartners.co.uk

Fundraiser

WALK 'THE WAY'

Virtual walkathon



During January and February 2026, join us on a virtual journey, covering the 1411 miles from the UK to Albania. This is a virtual walkathon so no passports are needed, you walk wherever you are! Whether its walking the dog or completing a ParkRun, your steps and donations will help to support the projects of 'The Way Ministry' in our youth work, occupational therapy and outreach projects in Albania.

Together we are stepping out in faith, walking closer towards 3 goals;

£2600	£5500	£25000
		
... to resource a full year of 'Youth Buzz' evangelism events in towns and villages. These regular events create safe and fun spaces for young people to build friendships, learn new skills and hear the gospel	... to source and store an initial stock of mobility and therapy equipment, in order to promote independence and improve the quality of life for those impacted by illness or disability	... to equip the ministry with a suitable minivan, allowing us to reach remote villages, transport equipment and bring youth outreach and therapy support directly to the communities.

For more information, please scan the QR Code or follow this link:
<https://gofund.me/5e8a58b26>


thewayministry.al@gmail.com

Berti and Lynsey in Albania are launching a challenge to raise funds for their work. It's a walkathon that everyone can get involved with, aiming to collectively walk the distance from the UK to Albania. Have a look at the poster above or go to this link for more information or to donate <https://gofund.me/5e8a58b26>

New Wine is a Christian festival that people from St. Matt's go to every summer.



From 28 July – 2 August, New Wine is at the Bath & West Showground in Somerset for a powerful week of worship, teaching, age-specific programmes, and time together as the wider church family.

It's a chance to be refreshed, inspired, and equipped by the Holy Spirit, and to enjoy meaningful time with others on the same journey, as well as spending time relaxing with your church family and having fun! It is camping, but as UK summers are getting warmer and drier, it's not too bad!!

You can book at festival.new-wine.org

I hope you have a good weekend and that you can join us at church on Sunday.